

FIT FOR LIFE

*Brunswick County Government— Our Best Health For You
In Brunswick... from the Wellness Committee!*



County Begins Wellness Program!

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Why a Wellness Program?

Based on analyzing the statistics from our health insurance plan, the Brunswick County Group has 781 employees and 633 dependents for a total enrollment of 1414 members. 84% were enrolled under the Blue Care and 16% in Blue Options. Overall the Health Plan paid out in claims 14% more in 2003-2004 than the previous year and 8% more in 2004-2005 than last year. The membership from last year to the previous year only rose 1.7%.

With health care costs continuing to rise and the overall health of the general population declining (it is estimated that up to 60% of the population is considered obese), an organized, well promoted Wellness Program not only will help offset costs, but help our team members and family members obtain better health and in the long run save them money. What are some reasons the health plan incurred increased cost for the county?

Circulatory Diseases- #1 reason for hospitalization— 41% above norm.
Diagnostic Testing— 12% higher than the norm
Emergency Room visits—10% higher than the norm.
Prescription Drug usage increased from 14 to 16 per member.

Who is on your Wellness Committee.

A Wellness Committee was established in January of 2006. This committee is charged with the tasks of developing various wellness programs that will benefit all team members.

The committee members are: Ron Riggs, Human Resources and Eileen Gardner, Risk Management— Co-Chairpersons, Beverly Adams, Engineering; Brad Babson, Cafeteria; Tom Bagby, Tax Office; Greg Bellamy, Elections; Mamie Caison,

Soil and Water, Pam Cheers, Public Housing, Starie Grissett, Human Resources; Ann Hardy, Finance; Lamarr Hardy, Public Utilities-Billing; Cyndi Hendricks, GIS; Eric Hill, Health Dept.; John Hobgood, GIS; Tracy Hobgood, Planning; Judy Holden, Building Inspections; Tawny Jernigan, Economic Development; Arlene Kemeny, Libraries; Ken Kennedy; Building Inspections; Miquel Keur, Central Permitting; Marty Lawing, Administration; Fred Michael, Health Dept.; Susan Morgan, Co-op Ext.; George Page, Parks and Recreation; Sheila Rivenbark, Operations Svs.; Tiffany Rogers, Finance; Tom Rogers, EMS; Kevin Somerset, Operation Svs.; Steve Stone, Administration; Vern Thompson, MIS; Jeanette Threatt, DSS; Glenn Walker, Utilities; Deborah West, Human Resources; Khrystye Haselden-Wilson, Parks and Recreation; Ronnie Young, Tax Evaluation.

Special points of interest:

Coming in July— Brunswick County Employee Health and Benefits Fair.

Coming in August—Camp Wellness



Getty ready for the Wellness Walk— June 01- See page 4 for the story!

A Brief History of Wellness Programs

Did you know?

The first true employee fitness program was established at the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, OH in 1894. The program consisted of morning and afternoon exercise breaks for employees. Over the years major corporations followed suit like Apple Computer, Dow Chemical, Proctor and Gamble, Pepsico, Xerox and Tenneco among many others. At Tenneco the average annual medical claim for a non-exercising female employee (\$1535) was more than twice that of women who participated in the in-house exercise program. (\$639). For men, the average claim for non-exercisers (\$1,003) was nearly twice that of exercisers. (\$561)- 1993— President's Council. According to Dr. Herbert Benson, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. "Instituting a stress management program can reduce physician's office visits by as much as 50%" Adapted from the Book, "Wellness 9 to 5; Managing Stress at Work." by Valerie O'Hara PhD.

Cool and Easy Meals without Cooking

Our appetites tend to diminish in the hot summer months. Who wants to eat a big dinner when it's over 90 degrees outside? Cool, light food is much more appealing. Recipes can be healthy and delicious, filling in this need and not needing a bit of cooking. So, you can stay cool while preparing dinner and while eating it.

One of the best things about summer is that so much beautiful produce is abundant and we have some wonderful farmer's markets and supermarkets. When fruits and vegetables are this perfect, you don't need to do very much to them. Just let the fabulous flavors and colors dominate. Sometimes there's nothing nicer than sliced tomatoes, still warm from the garden, topped with basil leaves, fruity green olive oil, a bit of balsamic vinegar, and shaved Parmesan cheese. Mother Nature did all the work for you! So browse through your garden or local markets, then just assemble dinner.

Stay cool this week and be sure to browse through your air conditioned local supermarket looking for precooked ingredients so all you have to do is assemble, stir, and serve.

Canadian Bacon and Peach Salad

Just four ingredients make one of the tastiest salads ever. Be sure the peaches are ripe and sweet; you can substitute mangoes or nectarines if you'd like. This dish can be made in 15 minutes and you could substitute nectarines or other fruit for the peaches.

Ingredients:

- 10 oz. bag mixed salad greens
- 12 oz. sliced Canadian bacon
- 2 peaches, sliced
- 1/2 cup honey mustard salad dressing

Preparation:

Cut Canadian bacon into quarters. Toss with remaining ingredients in a large bowl and serve. 4 servings.



Susan M. Morgan, CFCS

Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Education

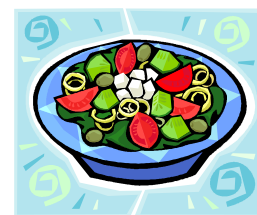
Web site: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/brunswick/>

NC Cooperative Extension Service

Brunswick County Center

P. O. Box 109, Bolivia, NC 28422

Phone: 253-2610 FAX: 253-2612



Look for the "High Points"

There's bad news and there's good news. The bad news is that, in spite of your best efforts, not every day will be a great one. That's the reality of life. The good news is that even bad days have moments that are better than others. And you can find comfort in that. The message here is that every day— even in your limited world— you can find "high points." I encourage you to look for the "high point" of the day. Instead of focusing on the negatives, look for the positives— the things you are grateful for and the little things that add joy to your life. Not every day is going to be a great one, but even the bad days have some small moment that is an expression of joy, hope or love if you look for it.

Look for the "high point" each day, and think about how your presence, your attitude, your smile, your laughter, and your kindness can become the "high point" for someone else's day. As Annie Dillard said. "How we spend our days is how we spend our lives." Choose to make each day an investment and spend your days in ways that add energy, enthusiasm, and enjoyment in your life and the lives of others. Article by June Alexander, Professional Speaker and Author. If you would like help in finding the "high points" you may try our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by calling **SOLUTIONS at 512-6004**. We also offer "Lunch and Learn" programs periodically. The last one dealt with coping with stress and was attended by over 35 team members. There will be a lunch and learn program coming in late June!

FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE— MARTY LAWING

I am pleased to see the County Wellness Program getting off to a good start, thanks to the commitment and dedication of the Wellness Committee. Often times, due to our busy lifestyles and obligations at work, home, church and other civic activities our personal health and fitness gets pushed to the back burner and receives a low priority. The Wellness Program will serve as a resource for beginning a regimen of regular physical activity and a forum to learn about the benefits living a healthier lifestyle and breaking habits that are harmful to your health. The Commissioners understand the benefits of having a healthy workforce and are investing in the program by including the construction of a walking trail in the 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan to be constructed in the upcoming fiscal year. A Wellness Center will also be provided in the subsequent year with equipment to help us meet our individual fitness goals and a Fitness Coordinator position will likely be included in the budget to assist with implementation of the Wellness Program. By being an active participant in the program you have the opportunity to look better, feel better and have a more positive outlook on life. Employee wellness and fitness programs are prevalent in the corporate sector and deemed a necessity to help employees meet the demands of stressful jobs and to help curb the high costs of medical insurance premiums. Some local governments in North Carolina have implemented wellness programs in recent years and have reported positive personal and organizational results. I believe the program will be a success. I encourage all employees to do something good for yourself and participate in the wellness program at whatever level you feel comfortable.



CIGNA is our new Health Plan Provider—July 1, 2006

Effective July 1, 2006 our new Health Care provider is Cigna Healthcare.

Through the **Healthy Rewards** programs, Cigna HealthCare members get access to a full range of health and wellness programs and services not covered by many traditional benefit plans. **Healthy Rewards** also can save you money whenever you use **Healthy Rewards** participating providers. To find them, simply visit **myCIGNA.com**.

Programs include:

- ◆ Weight Watchers
- ◆ Quitnet and Tobacco Solutions smoking cessation programs
- ◆ 10,000 steps exercise program
- ◆ Chiropractic Care
- ◆ Acupuncture
- ◆ Massage Therapy
- ◆ Eye Exams, frames & lenses
- ◆ Laser vision correction
- ◆ Fitness Club memberships
- ◆ Hearing Care
- ◆ Magazine discounts
- ◆ Natural supplements
- ◆ Anti-cavity products
- ◆ The Optical Shop

Not all Healthy Rewards are available in all states. Please visit myCigna.com to find out.

How Can You Get Fit and Stay Fit?

- ⇒ If you already exercise regularly, introduce a new fitness activity to your routine or focus on an area of fitness that better balances your overall fitness.
- ⇒ Aim to exercise at least 5 times a week starting at what is comfortable for you. 30 minutes to one hour is recommended but start anywhere.
- ⇒ Include 5 servings of fruit and vegetables in your daily diet.
- ⇒ Quit using tobacco products and stay quit
- ⇒ Switch to 1% or less milk and reduced dairy products, dressings and mayo
- ⇒ Limit meat servings to palm size
- ⇒ Try at two meatless meals per week.
- ⇒ Limit fried foods to no more than 2 servings a week.
- ⇒ Park in the furthest space.
- ⇒ Spend 30 minutes of your lunch hour exercising at least twice a week.
- ⇒ Stay Hydrated— drink 8– 8oz glasses of water a day—more if you exercise or when the weather is hot.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT OPENS NEW CLINIC

The Health Department opened its doors on March 1 for the new Seniors' Healthcare Clinic, but don't let the name fool you. The new clinic is located at the end of the building where Economic Development used to be and provides full medical service for persons sixteen years of age and older.

"We wanted to address the medical needs of persons 65 and older who were not being served," said Don Yousey, Health Director. "But when we hired the nurse practitioner as the provider, she was also qualified to see adults," he continued.

The clinic is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm and is a Blue Cross provider with the county paying the co-pay. A Cigna provider contract has been applied for and hopefully will be available starting in July.

Appointments are encouraged but walk-ins are welcome if you are willing to wait. For an appointment please call 2347 or 1-888-428-4429.

Check these discounts out at local fitness centers!

Sea Trail Plantation Village Activity Center– Sunset Beach– Single monthly memberships—\$30
Family Memberships for \$55.

Gold's Gym– Shallotte and Wilmington- \$40 off start off fee and \$29 per month.

Curves– All Brunswick County Locations– \$29 start off fee and \$29 per month

Elevations Fitness Center– Supply– No enrollment fee and \$25 per month for single



Wellness Walking Challenge Draws Record Participation!

The Brunswick County Wellness Committee has issued a Walking Challenge. Pictured are some of the 112 team members who took the challenge on June 1 and walked the .5 (1/2) mile track around certain buildings of the complex, all under cover. Over 160 team members have accepted the challenge to also walk more especially during the month of June. Each participant will log his/her walking miles each day on the Walking Challenge Calendar. On Monday after the end of the week, the team member will give the calendar to their manager or department ambassador who will turn it into Human Resources. Each participant's weekly total will be entered into a chart for all to see in the Cafeteria. At the end of the month, the person with the top number of miles walked will be recognized along with the department that has the most miles walked. If you need further information, contact Ron Riggs, Human Resources Specialist, Brunswick County. Ext 2003.

When Smokers Quit—The Health Benefits Over Time

20 minutes after quitting: Your blood pressure drops to a level close to that before the last cigarette. The temperature of your hands and feet increases to normal.

8 hours after quitting: The carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

24 hours after quitting: Your chance of a heart attack decreases.

2 weeks to 3 months after quitting: Your circulation improves and your lung function increases up to 30%.

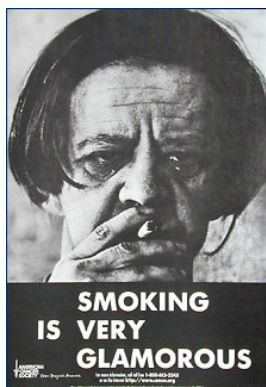
1 to 9 months after quitting: Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath decrease; cilia (tiny hair like structures that move mucus out of the lungs) regain normal function in the lungs, increasing the ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce infection.

1 year after quitting: The excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

5 years after quitting: Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker 5-15 years after quitting.

10 years after quitting: The lung cancer death rate is about half that of a continuing smoker's. The risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decrease.

15 years after quitting: The risk of coronary heart disease is that of a nonsmoker's.



Adapted from American Cancer Society Website